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Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 142127

71
ORIGIN NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 IO-13 ADP-00 EB-11 AID-20 AGR-20

OMB-01 IGA-02 TRSE-00 COME-00 SS-15 NSC-10 L-03 SR-02

ORM-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01

USIA-15 PRS-01 H-03 /182 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/PAB:LBLESSER:BG
7/19/73 X21453
APPROVED BY NEA:AHMEYER
NEA/PAB:PDCONSTABLE
EUR:JARMITAGE (DRAFT)
EB/OFP:CCAVANAUGH (DRAFT)
AID/ASIA/SA:AFESSENDEN
AID/ASIA/DP:ASHAKOW
AID/FFP:KBITTERMAN (DRAFT)
USDA/EMS:AMEAD/RSHEGOGUE
---------- 001634
P R 192146Z JUL 73
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY DACCA PRIORITY
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY MANILA

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E.O.: 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAID, US, BG
SUBJ: BANGLADESH FOOD SITUATION; CONVERSATION WITH
AMBASSADOR ALI.

REF: (A) STATE 138284, (B) DACCA 3193

MANILA FOR REES AND SCHWARTZWALDER AT POPULATION CONF.

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1. BANGLADESH AMBASSADOR HOSSAIN ALI AND ECON. COUNSELOR

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

MUHITH MET WITH AMBASSADOR ARMIN MEYER, SPECIAL CONSULTANT FOR SOUTH ASIA (NEA), ON JULY 17, AT MEYER'S INVITATION, TO DISCUSS FOOD SITUATION. LESSER OF NEA/PAB SAT IN.

2. DISCUSSION OPENED WITH EXCHANGE OF IMPRESSIONS ON PRESENT STATUS FOOD SHIPMENTS, PLEDGES, OFFTAKES, ETC. AMBASSADOR MEYER SUMM UP BY AGREEING THAT THERE MIGHT WELL BE PROBLEMS FOR BDG IN MAINTAINING DESIRED RATION LEVELS UNTIL US SHIPMENTS BEGIN ARRIVING IN SEPTEMBER. HE POINTED OUT THAT USG HAS PROVIDED MORE THAN ONE MILLION TONS FOODGRAINS SINCE BD INDEPENDENCE AND COMMITTED 280,000 TONS MORE FOR SHIPMENT FIRST QUARTER FY-1974, WHICH IS SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF 800,000 TON GLOBAL WHEAT TOTAL FOR QUARTER. FURTHERMORE, USG STILL INTENDS IF AVAILABILITY PERMITS TO PROGRAM ADDITIONAL WHEAT FOR FY-1974.

3. AMBASSADOR MEYER STRESSED THAT USG NOW FINDS ITSELF DEALING WITH SERIOUS PL-480 AVAILABILITY PROBLEMS WHICH PREVENT RAPID ADDITIONS TO THE BD WHEAT ALLOCATION (NO ALLOCATION MADE BEYOND FIRST QUARTER--SEE STATE 138598. THESE PROBLEMS INCLUDE SEVERE SCARCITY OF COMMODITIES AND RISING PRICES DUE TO EXTRAORDINARY WORLDWIDE DEMAND, AND REQUESTS FROM A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES IN ADDITION TO BANGLADESH FOR URGENT CONSIDERATION FOR CONCESSIONAL FOOD SHIPMENTS ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS. BESIDES UNCERTAIN AVAILABILITY THERE STILL REMAINS THE POSSIBILITY THAT EXPORT CONTROLS COULD BE EXTENDED TO INCLUDE FOODGRAINS. WE UNABLE TO ASSESS LIKELIHOOD OF LATTER CONTINGENCY, BUT IF IT WERE TO TAKE PLACE IT COULD PRECLUDE ABILITY OF USG TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL QUANTITIES. TAKEN TOGETHER THESE FACTORS MEAN USG CANNOT AT PRESENT GUARANTEE ADDITIONAL FOODGRAIN COMMITMENTS.

4. AMBASSADOR MEYER THEN TURNED TO BDG'S NOTE OF JULY 10 INFORMING US THAT BDG HAD APPROACHED SOVIETS FOR DIVERSION OF 200,000 TONS OF US-PURCHASED WHEAT AND REQUESTING QUOTE THAT GOVT OF BANGLADESH MAY BE ALLOWED TO RETURN 200,000 TONS OF WHEAT TO THE GOVT OF THE USSR OUT OF THE 850,000 TONS FOR WHICH THE GOVT OF BANGLADESH HAS MADE A REQUEST TO THE USG FOR SUPPLIES UNDER PL-480 TITLE I UNQUOTE.
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GIVEN THE EMERGENCY WHICH BDG REPS HAVE DESCRIBED, WE CAN UNDERSTAND BDG'S NEED TO GET SUPPLIES IN AUGUST, AMBASSADOR MEYER SAID. DIVERSION OF SOVIET PURCHASED WHEAT SEEMS TO BE ONLY ALTERNATIVE AND WE COULD HAVE NO OBJECTION. RE LOGISITICS, AMBASSADOR ALI AGREED SHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS AND COSTS WOULD BE RESPONSIBILITY OF SOVIETS AND BDG. (MUHITH NOTED REPORTS HE HAS HEARD THAT SOVIETS ALREADY CONTACTIG SHIP OPERATORS RE DIVERSION PROSPECTS.)

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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5. RE QUESTION OF 200,000 TON REPLACEMENT, AMBASSADOR MEYER SAID THERE APPEAR TO BE FOUR POSSIBLE APPROACHES: (A) RELIANCE ON HOP-FOR FUTURE USG SUPPLIES, ALTHOUGH NO GUARANTEE IS POSSIBLE AT THIS TIME; (B) PRESSING OTHER DONORS WHO HAVE NOT MET THEIR PLEDGES TO PROVIDE REPLACEMENT SUPPLY (A COURSE WHICH AMBASSADOR MEYER RECOMMENDED); (C) BDG'S PERSUADING SOVIET GOVT TO FOREGO REPLACEMENT; AND (D) BDG PROCUREMENT ON COMMERCIAL BASIS.

6. AMB. ALI IN REPLY NOTED THAT USG PLEDGE WAS BY FAR THE LARGEST AND THAT BDG PLANNING LARGELY BASED ON THAT. HE REEMPHASIZED THAT PROSPECTS FOR AUGUST EXTREMELY GLOOMY WITH PRESENT STOCKS LOW AND MINIMAL ARRIVALS SCHEDULED FOR JULY-AUGUST. HE SAID THAT INITIAL REACTION FROM SOVIETS WAS THAT THEY ARE QUOTE FAVORABLY DISPOSED UNQUOTE TO MAKING DIVERSION BUT BDG FEELS IT MUST BE IN POSITION TO ASSURE REPLACEMENT LATER. HE ASKED WHETHER USG HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH SOVIET GOVT ON SUBJECT. AMBASSADOR MEYER REPLIED THAT

WE HAD TOUCHED BASE VERY INFORMALLY HERE IN WASHINGTON BUT THAT WE HAD NO INDICATION FROM THE SOVIETS AS TO THEIR INTENTIONS OR DESIRES. FYI. THIS REFERS TO CONVERSATION BETWEEN EUR DEPY. ASST. SECY. ARMITAGE AND ECON. COUNSELOR OF SOVIET EMBASSY IN WHICH SOVIETS MENTIONED THAT THEY HAD REPORTED SUBSTANCE OF WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE OF JULY 11 (SEE REFTEL A). ARMITAGE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN BEING INFORMED OF ANY REACTION FROM MOSCOW ON SUBJECT AND CONVEYED IMPRESSION USG WOULD NOT BE LIKELY TO TAKE NEGATIVE VIEW OF SOVIET DECISION TO ACCEDE TO BDG REQUEST FOR DIVERSIONS. END FYI.

7. COMMENT: THIS OUTLINE OF PRESENT STATE OF USG
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THINKING ON SUBJECT HAS ALSO BEEN CONVEYED INFORMALLY TO INTERESTED CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRERS. EMBASSY/USCOR MAY DRAW ON IT AS APPROPRIATE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH BDG AND OTHERS SUCH AS UNROB IN DACCA.

8. DISCUSSION WITH AMB. ALI TOOK PLACE BEFORE RECEIPT REFTEL B. RUSH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOOD SHORTAGE, STOCKPILES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 JUL 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE142127
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: LBLESSER:BG
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730722/aaaaapzb.tel
Line Count: 161
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Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
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EO Systematic Review
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